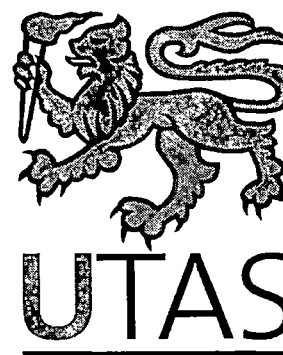


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**Something old, something new: the development of the  
saxophone quartet and interpreting Alexander Glazunov's**

***Quartett für Saxophones Op. 109***

by

Georgina Smith

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of

Masters of Music Studies

University of Tasmania (October, 2011)

## Declaration of Originality

I declare that this exegesis contains no material that has been accepted for a degree or diploma by the University or any other institution, except by way of background information and duly acknowledged in the exegesis. I have read the University statement on Academic misconduct (Plagiarism) on the University website at [www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism](http://www.utas.edu.au/plagiarism) and to the best of my knowledge and belief the exegesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due acknowledgement is made in the text, nor does the exegesis contain any material that infringes copyright.

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## Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the following people for their contribution in making this year an absolute joy...

Dr. Heather Monkhouse for her continual support and guidance.

Jabra Latham for his unwavering enthusiasm, both inside and out of the practise room.

Abby Fraser for her helpful insight into the lofty world of academia,

...and without question, my eternal gratitude to Benjamin Price, Mitchell Ellis and Nicholas Nugent for their time, patience, good humour and ability...without whom this project would never have been possible.



The second half of this paper includes a series of audio examples as set out by the author to illustrate musically interpretive decisions. These musical examples are found on the accompanying CD and correspond to score extracts labelled as Figures in the text. Please see Appendix E for a full track list of audio examples.

Accompanying audio examples will appear as footnotes to the text as:

(  **Audio Example X – Quartet Name –Movement- example subtitle/ see Figure X)**

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## INTRODUCTION:

The origins of the saxophone quartet can be traced to the inception of the instrument.<sup>1</sup> The development of the classical saxophone quartet and the continually growing body of repertoire was aided by Alexander Glazunov's pivotal work *Quartett für Saxophones Op.109* (1932). This work allowed composers to see the saxophone in a new light whereby it indicated its potential as a serious instrument. Glazunov's contribution to the literature for classical saxophone can be seen as important as indicated by the composers and works that followed shortly after, expanding its repertoire throughout the early twentieth century in solo, orchestral and chamber music.<sup>2</sup> Despite never reaching the inventor, Adolphe Sax's hope for the instrument to be treated as a serious full time addition to the orchestra,<sup>3</sup> the saxophone nevertheless now enjoys opportunities for performance in a variety settings and a growing body of repertoire. The first part of this paper will outline the development of the early saxophone quartet and the contribution of Marcel Mule and Alexander Glazunov to the classical saxophone. The second half will focus on the scope for interpretation of *Op. 109* and relate contrasting examples of interpretive decisions by four of the most accomplished and influential current saxophone

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<sup>1</sup> S. Plugge, "The history of the saxophone ensemble: a study into the development of the saxophone quartet as a concert genre" (DMA, North Western University, 2004), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Compositions that followed soon after Glazunov's include quartets by Eugène Bozza, Jean Rivier, Florent Schmitt, Jean Absil, Jean Françaix and Gabriel Pierné. The saxophone was also used in orchestral works following this by composers such as Darius Milhaud, Maurice Ravel, Arthur Honegger, William Walton, Vaughn Williams, Benjamin Britten and Frank Martin. Stephen Trier "The saxophone in the orchestra" in the *Cambridge companion to the saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 103-105.

<sup>3</sup> Wally Horwood, *Adolphe Sax 1814-1894 – his life and legacy* (Baldock: Egon Publishers Ltd, 1983), 40.



quartets. This section will also discuss the challenges faced by the author's saxophone quartet, 22SQ in their performance preparation of this work.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE SAXOPHONE:**

Born in Dinant Belgium, Adolphe Sax (1814-1894)<sup>4</sup> was the son of instrument maker Charles Joseph Sax. From a young age Sax was exposed to the craftsmanship, acoustic and artistic design of musical instruments.<sup>5</sup> After training at the Brussels Conservatory in voice and flute Sax took up the clarinet. Despite his natural talent at the instrument Sax was continually fascinated by the challenge of trying to improve its mechanisms. With access to his father's workshop Sax was able to spend time developing his craft and experimenting with instrument design.<sup>6</sup> While the exact process of Sax's instrument development is undocumented, it is most commonly suggested that the combination of a bass clarinet mouthpiece and ophicleide was his basis for experimentation.<sup>7</sup>

After developing a prototype instrument that would later be known as a Bass saxophone<sup>8</sup> Sax relocated to Paris where he made alliances with composers such

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<sup>4</sup> Christened Antoine Joseph.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Howe, "The invention and early development of the saxophone, 1840-55" *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*, 28 (2003): 102.

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1344497> [Accessed July 29, 2011].

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> For extensive information on instrument design and origins the author recommends Wally Horwood's extensive writing on the development of the saxophone. Wally Horwood, *Adolphe Sax 1814-1894 – his life and legacy* (Baldock: Egon Publishers Ltd, 1983), 39.

as Hector Berlioz, Georges Kastner, Gaetano Donizetti and Giacomo Meyerbeer and set to work developing his new family of instruments.<sup>9</sup>

The first public use of the saxophone was in 1843 when Berlioz (1803-1869) rescored his *Chant Sacré* for a chamber ensemble of instruments that were either designed or modified by Sax and re-titled the work *Hymne pour les instruments de Sax*.<sup>10</sup> It was during these years and up until 1846 that Sax continued to refine his instruments and finally produced saxophones pitched in F, C, B ♭ and E ♭ to complete an entire family of instruments.<sup>11</sup> In 1857 Sax took a position teaching the first saxophone class at the Paris Conservatoire which he held until 1870.<sup>12</sup> Sax realised that the future of his instrument depended heavily on the training of new teachers and performers and begged to be allowed to continue teaching for free but to no avail.<sup>13</sup> 1866 saw the first saxophone patents of Adolphe Sax expire and many instrument makers soon began manufacturing and selling their own prototypes indicating the increased popularity in the instrument.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Horwood, 44.

<sup>10</sup> Robert Howe, "The invention and early development of the saxophone, 1840-55" *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*, 28 (2003): 116.

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/1344497> (Accessed July 29, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 162.

<sup>12</sup> Sax's position was terminated after the French defeat at Sedan in the Franco Prussian War caused a number of financial recessions. Thomas Liley, "Invention and development" in the *Cambridge companion to the saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 9.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Millereau, Buffet-Crampon and Gautrot ainé all based in Paris were the first of these instrument makers. Albert Rice, "Making and improving the 19<sup>th</sup> century saxophone" *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society*, 35 (2009): 93.

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/821015623> (Accessed September 4, 2011).

## EARLY QUARTET DEVELOPMENT:

The saxophone ensemble, and therefore the formation of the saxophone quartet, can be traced to the origin of the instrument itself.<sup>15</sup> The work of composers in Adolphe Sax's group of friends are indicative that Sax always intended the instruments to be played as a family of instruments in various ensemble settings: Sax himself worked his hardest to ensure the survival of such repertoire by starting a publishing house *Chez Adolphe Sax* in 1858.<sup>16</sup> Between 1844 and 1928 there are 28 known works for saxophone chamber groups: 3 quintets, 2 sextets, 1 septet, 1 octet and 21 quartets.<sup>17</sup> Within these quartets the most common configuration is SATB (soprano, alto, tenor and baritone).<sup>18</sup>

One of the earliest references to the saxophone's suitability as a chamber instrument was suggested in a concert review of accomplished clarinettist Henri Wuille in 1856.<sup>19</sup> The unknown critic discusses Wuille's inclusion of the saxophone in his program:

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<sup>15</sup> S. Plugge, 1.

<sup>16</sup> Sax was forced to sell this part of his business in 1878 to appease creditors. The publishing house was initially sold to J. Kulgelmann who later sold it on to the larger French publishing company Margueritat. It is assumed that during this time a great deal of publishing plates for some of the earliest works for saxophone quartet ensembles were lost or destroyed. S. Plugge, 4.

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix A

<sup>18</sup> From these works, the two most commonly performed by modern ensembles are Georges Kastner's *Sextuor* (1844) arr. Sigurd Raschèr and Jean-Baptiste Singelee's *Premier Quatuor* Op. 53 (1857) reconstructed by Jean-Marie Londeix. The author supposes the popularity of these works amongst classical saxophone ensembles is due to the reconstruction work and subsequent accessibility of scores. T. Ruedman, "Lyric form archetype and the early works for saxophone quartet, 1844-1928: an analytical and historical context for saxophone quartet performance" (PhD diss., New York University, 2009), 21.

<sup>19</sup> Wuille (1822-1971) was a Belgian born clarinettist who travelled extensively throughout Europe and the United States of America during the latter part of the nineteenth century promoting both clarinet and saxophone.

This instrument belongs to a large family of brass instruments invented by Mr Sax, and in particular to the quartet of saxophones, which includes besides the alto which is the instrument in question here, the soprano, baritone and bass. Joined in a quartet, these congenial instruments should produce a harmonious [sic] effect and we hope to be able to hear them together someday.<sup>20</sup>

A common misconception about the saxophone quartet setting is that it was created by Marcel Mule (1901-2001), who formed a quartet of saxophones through his employment with the French military band, *Quatuor de la Garde Républicaine*.<sup>21</sup> The idea was instigated by Eugene Rosseau, who in his biographical sketch of Mule, noted that Mule's involvement in the Guard band led to the establishment of the first saxophone quartet. He claims that the world premiere of the saxophone quartet was by the *Guard quartet* on December 2, 1928 in La Rochelle. Rosseau goes on to discuss the importance of this event: "Never before had there been a saxophone quartet; there was no repertory."<sup>22</sup> The *Guard quartet* initially transcribed and performed works from the string quartet repertoire predominantly arranged by their baritone player. Pierre Vellones and Robert Clérisse both contributed to the early saxophone quartet

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<sup>20</sup> *Revue et gazette musicale de Paris* (March 19 1856): 78; trans. Mary Gutermuth, quoted in S. Plugge, "The history of the saxophone ensemble: a study into the development of the saxophone quartet as a concert genre" (DMA, North Western University, 2004), 5.

<sup>21</sup> Mule experimented with performing in various ensembles with other saxophonists and in 1928 with the involvement of other saxophonists in the Guard band Georges Chauvet, Rene Chaligne and Hippolyte Poimboeuf had firmly established his first saxophone quartet. Mule's quartet *Le Quatuor de la Garde Républicaine* made their public debut in December 1928 performing a program of transcriptions and enjoyed an immediate success. On leaving the Guard band, Mule's quartet became the *Quatuor de Saxophones de Paris* and finally the *Quatuor Marcel Mule*. *Quatuor de la Garde Républicaine* will be here on referred to by the author as the Guard quartet Richard Ingham "The saxophone quartet" in the *Cambridge companion to the saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 65.

<sup>22</sup> Eugene Rousseau, *Marcel Mule: his life and the saxophone* (Shell Lake, Wisconsin: Etoile Music, 1982), 17.

repertoire of the *Guard quartet* with light classical works.<sup>23</sup> Mule established the quartet in the hope of exploring a new medium for which new music could be written.<sup>24</sup> The formation of the *Guard quartet* and the subsequent repertoire composed for Mule's quartet or for the saxophone in general is evidence of Mule's contribution to the acceptance of the classical saxophone in the twentieth century.<sup>25</sup>

In his thesis, Dr. Scott Plugge identifies and discusses four contributing factors to the survival of the saxophone quartet and ensembles. The first of these factors identified is Adolphe Sax's time of employment at the Paris Conservatoire (1857-1870): Plugge explains that during these years Sax was able to use his position to influence composers and colleagues to write for his new instruments. The second factor is Sax's influence on the restructure of military bands.<sup>26</sup> The format initially adopted by the French military bands, using the standard family SATB or ATBBs, also spread to civilian bands throughout the rest of Europe and eventually the United States of America supporting the family of instruments in an ensemble environment. Plugge's third factor is the rise of the saxophone within popular culture and vaudeville groups throughout the United States combined with the mass production, sales and distribution during the so called

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 18-19.

<sup>24</sup> David J. Gibson, "Marcel Mule" *Saxophone Journal* 26 no. 5(2002): 10-11.

<sup>25</sup> For subsequent quartet repertoire see footnote 2. Richard Ingham "The saxophone quartet" in the *Cambridge companion to the saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 74.

<sup>26</sup> Sax was awarded a commission in 1845 to supply, re-organise and improve the French Military Band set up. Sax integrated saxophones, saxhorns and his own modified valved trumpets into the ensemble. SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, baritone) ATBBs (alto, tenor, baritone, bass). Horwood, 73-74.

'sax craze' years of the early 1920s.<sup>27</sup> As the final factor, Plugge identifies the contribution of Edward Lefebre (1835-1911)<sup>28</sup> and his output with the American Sax Quartette in addition to the previously mentioned contribution of Marcel Mule.<sup>29</sup>

## GLAZUNOV AND THE SAXOPHONE:

Alexander Glazunov (1865-1936) was one of the last great Russian Romantic composers.<sup>30</sup> Born in St Petersburg to a musical family, Glazunov was considered a child prodigy from a young age. His ability to construct mature symphonic music by his teens generated an image to the public that he was destined for great feats of musical genius.<sup>31</sup> Glazunov took up a career as lecturer at the St Petersburg Conservatory and dedicated his life to teaching and composing. During these years Glazunov also had the opportunity to travel extensively. Joannes Ernst suggests it was around 1889 on a trip to Paris that Glazunov was first exposed to the saxophone.<sup>32</sup> During this trip Glazunov attended many gatherings in the company of Jules Massenet (1842-1912) and Ambroise Thomas

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<sup>27</sup> The 'sax craze' years are most often defined as the period between 1915 and 1930 when several hundred thousand saxophones were manufactured and purchased throughout the United States of America. M. Hester, "A study of the saxophone soloists performing with the Sousa band: 1893-1930" (DMA, University of Arizona, 1995) 45.

<sup>28</sup> The author has chosen to use the Anglaised version of Édouard Lefebvre. Lefebre was a continual advocate for the classical saxophone. After meeting Sax in Paris he dedicated his life to study, performance and teaching choosing to showcase early original saxophone repertoire whenever possible. After immigrating to the USA Lefebre joined Patrick Gilmore's 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment National Guard Band where he also founded one the first American saxophone quartets. J. Noyes, "Edward A Lefebre: pre-eminent saxophonist of the nineteenth century" (DMA, Manhattan school of music, 2000) 3,17,21, 31.

<sup>29</sup> S. Plugge, iii-v.

<sup>30</sup> Donald J Venturini, *Alexander Glazounov – his life and works* (Delphos, Ohio: Aero, 1992), 5.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Johannes Ernst, "The sixtieth anniversary of the premiere of Alexander Glazounov's quartet for saxophones. *Rohrblatt* 8 no. 4 (1993): 156-157.

(1811-1896),<sup>33</sup> both of whom made use of the saxophone in their orchestral writing.<sup>34</sup> Subsequent exposure to the saxophone occurred on a trip to America where Glazunov met George Gershwin and was exposed to jazz for the time. In his journal Glazunov noted:

Isn't it strange! But I like jazz. We find in it marvellous rhythms, even if Wagner has qualified it as 'breeding music.' In jazz it is difficult to distinguish composition and performance: the success of the one depends on an equilibrium between one and the other.<sup>35</sup>

This tour generated an interest in something new for Glazunov. On returning to Paris, Glazunov was approached by Ukrainian composer Thomas de Hartmann to write a work for saxophones and Glazunov was immediately interested by this new project, as he indicated in his correspondence with Maximilian Oseevich Steinberg:<sup>36</sup>

May 11, 1932

The novelty of this work really thrills me, because I was formerly writing only string quartets. I don't know how it will sound.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Massenet scored for saxophone in his works *Hérodiade* (1877) and *Werther* (1892) while Thomas included saxophone in his operas *Hamlet* (1868) and *François de Rimini* (1882). Other composers who integrated saxophone into their orchestral writing at this time were George Bizet *L'Arlésienne* (1872), Delibes ballet *Sylvia* (1876), César Franck's opera *Hulda* (1885) and Camille Saint-Saëns' symphonic poem *La Junesse d'Hercule* (1877). Stephen Trier "The saxophone in the orchestra" in the *Cambridge companion to the saxophone*, ed. Richard Ingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 101.

<sup>35</sup>Alexander Glazunov as quoted in Donald J Venturini, *Alexander Glazounov – his life and works* (Delphos, Ohio: Aero, 1992), 43.

<sup>36</sup>Jacques Charles, "Dossier Glazounov," *Saxophone Symposium* 13 no. 3 (Summer 1988): 20.

<sup>37</sup>Alexander Glazunov as quoted in Andre Sobchenko, "Letters from the Glazunov years", *Saxophone Journal* 19 no. 2 (Sept/Oct 1997):67.

Hartmann was a composer of film music and on occasion had used the saxophonists of the République Guard Band for his works. Hartmann was a great admirer of Marcel Mule and the *Guard Quartet* but did not feel he possessed the skill to compose in a classical chamber setting.<sup>38</sup> Glazunov worked enthusiastically and completed his *Quartett für Saxophones Op. 109* between March and May 1932. Extracts from Glazunov's correspondence collated and translated by André Sobchenko<sup>39</sup> give great insight into the compositional development of the *Quartett* and its premiere performance.<sup>40</sup> Glazunov described his composition in correspondence to colleague Maximilian Oseevich Shteinberg at the St Petersburg Conservatory:

2<sup>nd</sup> June, 1932

I completed a composition for four saxophones (2 movements already scored and the third is in sketches). Movement I, Allegro B-dur in 3/4 with rhythm: a bit of American! Movement II, Canzona Variee. The theme is built only on harmony; the first two variations are strict classical medieval style. Next follows a variation with trills á la Schumann (akin to his symphonic etudes), variation á la Chopin and Scherzo. The Finale is in a fairly playful style.<sup>41</sup>

The Glazunov *Quartett* has become a standard work for the saxophone quartet, not only due to its historical place in the saxophone's development timeline, but

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<sup>38</sup>Johannes Ernst, "The sixtieth anniversary of the premiere of Alexander Glazounov's quartet for saxophones," *Rohrblatt* 8 no. 4 (1993): 156-157.

<sup>39</sup>See Appendix B

<sup>40</sup>Andre Sobchenko, "Letters from the Glazunov years," *Saxophone Journal* 19 no.2 (Sept/Oct 1997): 67.

<sup>41</sup>Glazunov as quoted in Andre Sobchenko, "Letters from the Glazunov years," *Saxophone Journal* 19 no. 2 (Sept/Oct 1997): 67.



also because of its unique stylistic traits. As such there are multiple recordings produced by professional and amateur quartets alike. As new instruments to the classical genre, saxophones are devoid of the rich and varied history of interpretation and performance practice that is available to other ensembles.<sup>42</sup>

### THE STYLE OF OPUS. 109:

Glazunov's *Quartett* is comprised of three movements and shows many similarities to his other chamber music works, in particular his string quartets.<sup>43</sup> Glazunov often looked to the past in his compositional style through use of harmony and texture.<sup>44</sup> Dr Eric Nestler discusses an example of this in the first movement, where Glazunov shows inspiration and influence of Wagner through his application of augmented triads composed out across the opening chords of the first phrase.<sup>45</sup> One of Glazunov's traits in his chamber works is the continual passing of melodic lines between the voices with hints of chromaticism and the frequent use of rhythmic diminution to develop material.<sup>46</sup> The inner movement is a theme and set of five variations. The *Canzona Variée*, or song is built on a simple harmonic progression with *Variation I* and *Variation II* working as inversions of this theme. The remaining variations reveal more obvious tributes to Glazunov's predecessors in the subtitles of *Variation III á la Schumann* and

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<sup>42</sup>T. Ruedman, "Lyric form archetype and the early works for saxophone quartet, 1844-1928: an analytical and historical context for saxophone quartet performance" (PhD diss., New York University, 2009), 2.

<sup>43</sup>Florence Badol-Bertrand trans. Mary Pardoe liner notes to *Greig, Glazunov, Dvorak, Habanera* quatuor de saxophones, (Alpha 041, compact disc, 2003).

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>For Nestler's harmonic analysis see Appendix C

<sup>46</sup>Badol-Bertrand.

*Variation IV à la Chopin. Variation V* is a scherzo and suggests the influence of Mendelssohn.<sup>47</sup> The rondo like<sup>48</sup> *Finale* encapsulates all Glazunov's compositional traits and shows harmonic colour and structure similar to Liszt and Brahms.<sup>49</sup>

## THE PREMIERE OF OPUS 109:

Glazunov's *Quartett* was given two premiere performances by the Guard quartet. The first was for the composer and a small group of friends at private concert in December 1932. The premiere performance open to the public was postponed while the Guard quartet trained new recruits on alto and tenor. This performance was given a year later in December 1933 and was received enthusiastically by an audience of over 150.<sup>50</sup> Twentieth century saxophone virtuoso Sigurd Raschèr recalls the event:

As I just was in Paris, I had to hear it. I still remember the homogeneous sound of the four saxophones. So enthusiastic was I that I applauded until my hands were red. Here was a real ovation, in its persistent liveliness obviously aimed not only at the performers, but more so yet at the composer: a tall, lightly stooping gentleman with white hair who stood quietly in the auditorium. With a benevolent smile he thanked [the

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<sup>47</sup>Susan Fancher, "Tackling the Glazunov Saxophone Quartet," *Saxophone Journal* 25 no. 3 (Jan/Feb 2001): 24.

<sup>48</sup>Green defines the main principle of the rondo form as the presence of the refrain or recurring theme. Glazunov uses a recurring theme through the finale but does not follow the Classical Rondo form. Douglas Green, *Form in tonal music: an introduction to analysis 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* (South Melbourne: Thomson Learning, 1979), 166.

<sup>49</sup>Florence Badol-Bertrand trans. Mary Pardoe liner notes to *Greig, Glazunov, Dvorak, Habanera* quatuor de saxophones, (Alpha 041, compact disc, 2003).

<sup>50</sup>Jacques Charles, "Dossier Glazounov," *Saxophone Symposium* 13 no. 3 (Summer 1988): 20-21.

audience] for the applause. In his life Glazunov had seen many ovations; this one, however, was different: his friends honoured him.<sup>51</sup>

## CURRENT LITERATURE:

Little historical or analytical work has been documented thus far in discussion of Glazunov's work or how to approach it as a saxophonist. Two exceptions to this are Dr. Eric Nestler's thesis, which includes a chapter on interpreting the Glazunov *Quartett*<sup>52</sup> and Saxophonist and teacher Susan Fancher's short article *Tackling the Glazunov Saxophone Quartet*,<sup>53</sup> which is aimed at less experienced quartets initially approaching the work. Nestler's thesis is an analysis of each movement with a specific focus on rhythm and the importance of it within the work.

Nestler applies the Cooper-Meyer method of analysis to the *Canzona Variée* along with *Variation I* and *Variation II* to indicate a possible approach to interpretation and phrasing of the theme.<sup>54</sup> Nestler claims this analysis will assist performers in their understanding of which parts of the phrase to stress as well as phrasing in

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<sup>51</sup>Raschèr as quoted in Jacques Charles, "Dossier Glazounov," *Saxophone Symposium* 13 no. 3 (Summer 1988): 20-21.

<sup>52</sup>Eric Nestler, "A performance analysis of Alexander Glazunov's saxophone quartet Op.109, William Karlins quartet no. 2 for saxophones, variations and cadenzas, and Florent Schmitt's saxophone quartet Op.102" (DMA, Indiana University, 1993).

<sup>53</sup>Susan Fancher, "Tackling the Glazunov Saxophone Quartet", *Saxophone Journal* 25 no. 3 (Jan/Feb 2001): 23.

<sup>54</sup>Grosvenor Cooper and Leonard Meyer, *The rhythmic structure of music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 1. The Cooper-Meyer analysis is a theoretical framework for understanding and interpreting music, form and structure through the analysis of rhythm. The ethos as set out by the authors of this method is that successful interpretation of music depends upon the performer's sensitivity to and awareness of rhythmic structure. See Appendix D for Nestler's application of this method to the featured soprano line in Glazunov's *Canzona*.

general.<sup>55</sup> However he goes on to state this type of analysis is irrelevant to *Variations III, IV and V*.<sup>56</sup> Nestler concludes his thesis by stressing that the performer's highest priority should be rhythmic control whilst making a feature of the continuity of the composite rhythmic patterns and that these elements are vital for successful performance.<sup>57</sup> Nestler's writing is a valuable resource in that he highlights the importance of score and rhythmic familiarisation for the performer, however this is the sole focus and his writing gives little attention to musical and performance challenges such as phrasing, stamina, dynamics, articulation, *rubato*, tempi, intonation or balance.

In her article *Tackling the Glazunov Quartet*,<sup>58</sup> Susan Fancher discusses important features and performance aspects of the work. Fancher highlights stamina for performers, and the flow between the set of variations as essential considerations.<sup>59</sup> She discusses using the melodic contour to phrase and guide the use of dynamics.<sup>60</sup> In summation, Fancher recommends playing passionately and dramatically but to exercise restraint with the dynamic range and attempt to emulate a nineteenth century string quartet, as this was Glazunov's experience in chamber music.<sup>61</sup> Fancher's article provides an introduction to Glazunov's work and is a suitable starting point for developing players as it assumes little or no

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<sup>55</sup>Eric Nestler, "A performance analysis of Alexander Glazunov's saxophone quartet Op.109, William Karlins quartet no. 2 for saxophones, variations and cadenzas, and Florent Schmitt's saxophone quartet Op.102" (DMA, Indiana University, 1993), 36.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid, 39.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid, 48.

<sup>58</sup>Susan Fancher, "Tackling the Glazunov Saxophone Quartet," *Saxophone Journal* 25 no. 3 (Jan/Feb 2001): 23.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid, 24.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid, 25.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid, 26.

prior knowledge of the composer, the work or how to approach performing as a saxophone quartet.

Glazunov's work is made challenging by its thematic material and style of composition. However, as a work written specifically for the saxophone quartet, *Op. 109* should be approached with pride by saxophonists who can master and embrace the idiosyncratic intricacies of the instrument. In his study of musical performance Edward T. Cone discusses that when it comes to interpreting a piece of music:

...We must choose our own paths through them, and work out for ourselves, as we go along, their various inner relationships and meanings....we must therefore decide what is important and make that as clear as possible, even at the expense of other aspects of the work. After all there will be other performances!<sup>62</sup>

## INITIALLY APPROACHING OP. 109:

The following is a discussion on differing points of interpretation made by four of the most successful and influential saxophone quartets of the twentieth and twenty first centuries, respectively the Marcel Mule Quartet,<sup>63</sup> the Aurelia

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<sup>62</sup>Edward T Cone, *Musical form and musical performance* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1968), 33-34.

<sup>63</sup>Formerly known as Mule's quartet *Le Quatuor de la Garde Républicaine*.

Saxophone Quartet, the Raschèr Quartet and Quatuor Habanera<sup>64</sup> The discussion will also address significant challenges faced by the author's quartet 22SQ in terms of performance practice and learning to interpret Glazunov's *Quartett für Saxophones, Op. 109*.

## **LEARNING FROM THE GREATS - SELECTED QUARTETS FOR DISCUSSION:**

A set of recorded extracts from Glazunov's *Op.109* is in existence as performed by the Marcel Mule quartet.<sup>65</sup> These recordings provide an invaluable resource as they give the listener an idea of Mule's interpretation. The extracts provide an authentic saxophone quartet performance of Glazunov's work: as the dedicatees of the work, the quartet had opportunity for interaction with the composer through performance and rehearsals. Unfortunately the recorded set is only of the *Canzona*, *Variation IV á la Chopin* and *Variation V Scherzo*. Despite being incomplete this set of recordings provides insight into early twentieth century classical saxophone technique and alludes to the way in which the premiere was heard by its composer.

Present at the premiere of Glazunov's *Quartett* was the young German self taught saxophonist Sigurd Raschèr (1907-2001). Raschèr's enthusiasm for Glazunov's work prompted him to request a meeting with the composer where he

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<sup>64</sup>From here on the Author refers to English version of the quartet's name as the Habanera Quartet.

<sup>65</sup>Marcel Mule – The early quartets from *The legendary saxophonists collection: critical analytical guide to the developmental performance history of the classical saxophone*. Copyright License to A. Jackson, 2008.

subsequently displayed his abilities and diverse capabilities on the saxophone.<sup>66</sup> The result of this meeting was Glazunov's *Concerto for alto saxophone and string orchestra Op.109*.<sup>67</sup> This concerto is one of the first major solo works composed for classical saxophone and despite its mediocre reception has become part of the solid foundation of standard repertoire.<sup>68</sup>

Sigurd Raschèr's career as a concert soloist and teacher spanned many decades. In 1969 at age 62 Raschèr started his first saxophone quartet with daughter Carina on soprano, Bruce Weinberger on tenor and Linda Bangs on baritone. With a few changes in personnel the Raschèr quartet continues to perform as one of the most successful and highly sought after chamber ensembles with approximately 200 works composed for Raschèr as a soloist and 300 works composed for the ensemble.<sup>69</sup> In an interview with James Noyes during 1999 the quartet discussed their group philosophy and approach to music making.<sup>70</sup> This philosophy focuses on the cultivation of quality saxophone repertoire as well as aiming to inspire and educate future generations and to strive for a beautiful, flexible tone.<sup>71</sup>

In 1995 the Raschèr quartet recorded Glazunov's Quartet for Saxophones. One of the most unique features of this quartet's recording is their approach to the

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<sup>66</sup>Sigurd Raschèr. "Alexander Glazounov – Concerto pour saxophone alto avec l'orchestre de cordes," *Saxophone Symposium* 13 no. 2 (Spring 1988): 16.

<sup>67</sup>The Concerto is unaccountably given the same Opus number as the quartet.

Donald J Venturini, *Alexander Glazounov – his life and works* (Delphos, Ohio: Aero, 1992), 46.

<sup>68</sup>Regina Black and Douglas Woodfull-Harris, "Introduction," notes to Concerto in Eb by Alexander Glazunov (Germany: Bärenreiter Urtext, 2010), X-XIII.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

<sup>70</sup>This interview was given four years after recording the Glazunov quartet and members of the quartet at this time were Carina Raschèr, Elliot Riley, Bruce Weinberger and Kenneth Coons.

<sup>71</sup>James Noyes, "Raschèr saxophone quartet," *Saxophone Journal* 23 no. 6 (July/Aug 1999): 37.

blending of sounds and the expressive tone quality of each of the instruments. The blend of sound is enhanced by the use of older style vintage saxophones combined with large chambered mouthpieces.<sup>72</sup>

The Aurelia saxophone quartet, comprised of Dutch saxophonists Johan van der Linden, André Arends, Arno Bornkamp and Willem van Merwijk formed in 1982 and are considered one of the great saxophone quartets performing today.<sup>73</sup> Like the Raschèr Quartet, Aurelia continues to champion new works for the saxophone quartet and are seen as leaders in the field of the classical saxophone as individual soloists, chamber musicians and teachers.<sup>74</sup> Aurelia's recording of the Glazunov *Quartett* for saxophones was completed in March 1994, Zwolle, The Netherlands.<sup>75</sup> All members of Aurelia play on modern instruments.<sup>76</sup> Aurelia play with musicality and interact with sensitivity and superior ensemble skills.<sup>77</sup>

The Habanera quartet formed in Paris 1993 and is currently the leading French saxophone quartet.<sup>78</sup> The members of Habanera are renowned for their technical

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<sup>72</sup>Peter Avis, liner notes to *Music for saxophones*, the Raschèr saxophone quartet, (Cala CACD77003, compact disc, 1995). For further information on the acoustical properties of large chambered mouthpieces the author recommends: Frederick Wyman "an acoustical study of alto saxophone mouthpiece chamber design" (PhD diss., Eastman school of music, 1972).

<sup>73</sup>Ronald E. Grames, "French Saxophones," *Fanfare – the magazine for serious record collectors*, 34 no. 4 (March 2010): 399.

<sup>74</sup>Aurelia saxophone quartet "Aurelia Quartet" Official Aurelia saxophone quartet website <http://www.aureliasaxophonequartet.com/kwartet.php?hl=1&wie=kwartet> (accessed October 1, 2011).

<sup>75</sup>Unknown author, liner notes to *4 generations by Russian composers*, Aurelia saxophone quartet, (Challenge CC72039, compact disc, 1993).

<sup>76</sup>usan Fancher, "Saxophones quartet equipment survey," *Saxophone Journal* 29 no. 3 (Jan/Feb 2005): 45.

<sup>77</sup>Grames, 399.

<sup>78</sup>Florence Badol-Bertrand trans. Mary Pardoe liner notes to *Greig, Glazunov, Dvorak*, Habanera quatuor de saxophones, (Alpha 041, compact disc, 2003).



flair, dexterity, purity and cleanness of tone. All members of the quartet perform using modern French Selmer saxophones, mouthpieces, reeds and accessories.<sup>79</sup> Habanera's recording of Glazunov's *Quartett* was made in 2003<sup>80</sup> and exemplifies their distinctive style of playing where each voice within the quartet is distinctly heard. Every articulation is clean and prominent and despite playing on similar equipment little blending between the voices takes place.

To chart the progress of preparing Glazunov's *Quartett* the author worked as a member of an established saxophone quartet and documented the ensemble's progress through the recording of rehearsals, workshops and early performances. The aim of this was to be able to compare interpretive decisions and the developmental process the quartet experienced in performance preparation. The author's quartet 22SQ prepared Glazunov's *Quartett* between March and June 2011 and culminated this learning process with a performance of the work as part of a public recital. 22SQ then proceeded to make a studio recording of the work.

## **MOVEMENT I – ALLEGRO**

The performance of the opening movement of the Glazunov Quartet is pivotal to the nature of the reception of the work by the listener. As the longest movement it is essential that this movement is performed well and sustains the interest of the listener. This can be achieved by maintaining the forward momentum of the

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<sup>79</sup> Badol-Bertrand.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

movement, aiming for a continuous flow of the melodic line throughout. Setting and maintaining a good opening tempo is vital for the movement to progress with the intended feel of one beat per bar.

One of the biggest challenges for 22SQ in the preparation of Movement I was the opening phrase (see Figure 1). Balance and intonation were the contributing factors that hindered progress. The opening phrase is a series of unison chords divided into three phrase members. (5 bars + 6 bars + 5 bars labelled A, B and C in Figure 1)<sup>81</sup>

**Figure 1 Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Movement I - opening phrase**

I

Alexander Glasunow (1865–1936)  
op 109 (:932)

*Allegro* MM♩ = 69

Sopran-  
saxophon (B)

Alt-  
saxophon (Es)

Tenor-  
saxophon (B)

Bariton-  
saxophon (Es)

A

B

C

1

<sup>81</sup>Subdivision of the overall phrase is felt in three distinct sections regardless of the absence of phrase markings. The author has chosen to use the terminology as set out in: Douglas Green, *Form in tonal music: an introduction to analysis 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* (South Melbourne: Thomson Learning, 1979), 30.

The first phrase member commences with the soprano and tenor paired together in unison and the alto and baritone in unison creating the interval of a Major third between E  $\flat$  and G.<sup>82</sup> The parts then shift harmonically in contrary motion. This is similarly repeated throughout the following phrase members.<sup>83</sup> The voice ranges within the chords combined with the difficulties associated with playing in unison makes this a challenging progression, as the harmonic progression does not follow the traditional tonic, sub-dominant, dominant, tonic progression approach to tonality.<sup>84</sup> The baritone saxophone begins in its upper middle octave and is required to play a set of pitches that for 22SQ's baritone<sup>85</sup> player were notoriously sharp (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Movement I - baritone note progression**



The opening chords were also made challenging by the baritone player's preference for a Raschèr brand large chambered mouthpiece on a modern instrument. This in turn created issues with intonation and balance: the passage required unison pitching with the alto in its middle range, which was most often

<sup>82</sup>These notes are stated in concert pitch as opposed to their respective transposed pitches.

<sup>83</sup>For detailed harmonic analysis of this progression see Dr. Eric Nestler's analysis Appendix D

<sup>84</sup>Eric Nestler, "A performance analysis of Alexander Glazunov's saxophone quartet Op.109, William Karlins quartet no. 2 for saxophones, variations and cadenzas, and Florent Schmitt's saxophone quartet Op.102" (DMA, Indiana University, 1993), 34.

<sup>85</sup>The author will from here on refer to the saxophones by their range.

comparatively flatter to the baritone.<sup>86</sup> Additionally 22SQ's tenor player had a tendency to dominate the balance of the opening chord due to his resonant approach to the saxophone's middle register and strong dynamic capabilities. Meanwhile, the soprano line is scored in a comfortable range and 22SQ's soprano player found his main concern was the need for accurate intonation with the tenor.

These elements made the opening the most demanding section of the movement. This section is often overlooked in terms of the need for individual assuredness of intonation and the ensemble skills required to perform this section accurately. As an ensemble, the members of 22SQ needed to be secure in their own skills as well as cooperating by listening, communicating and adjusting their playing where necessary to benefit the group. 22SQ had many failed attempts while rehearsing this section. The ensemble was most successful after isolating individual parts, working each chord until balance and intonation were perfected and then attempting to perform the passage as a sequence. It was continually a haphazard opening, however the quartet found that not overblowing the *forte* dynamic and instead aiming for a well supported blend of sound reduced the risk of intonation issues.

Another consideration for the quartet tackling this work was the effective passing of the melodic lines between the voices. This is characteristic of

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<sup>86</sup>For further reading on mouthpiece chamber design and the subsequent effects see Frederick Wyman "an acoustical study of alto saxophone mouthpiece chamber design" (PhD diss., Eastman school of music, 1972).

Glazunov's compositional style and must be considered.<sup>87</sup> In his discussion of the first movement Nestler recommends aiming for metronomic precision in tempo choice and awareness of motivic dialogue between voices for a cohesive performance.<sup>88</sup> This was experienced by the members of 22SQ, who found that if one player took liberties with *rubato* throughout these sections not only the balance but the flow and rhythmic continuity of the entire movement suffered as a result of this rhythmic unease.

The Aurelia quartet's recording gives a gentle opening to the movement, and compared with the other quartets is performed with much more *rubato* throughout the opening phrases (see Figure 1).<sup>89</sup> While this is a very musical approach, it also creates a feeling of stagnation of the flowing melody. The gentle effect achieved by this approach however is a tribute to the Aurelia quartet to perform this movement with the awareness of their manipulation of tempi throughout this movement in a manner that ensures all possible characteristics and colours are highlighted throughout.

In contrast, the Habanera Quartet performs this movement with a sense of continual motion, employing very subtle shifts in tempi and feel but always pushing forward. Their biggest contrast occurs just before the end at rehearsal number 35 where they demonstrate the two beat pulse by using forceful,

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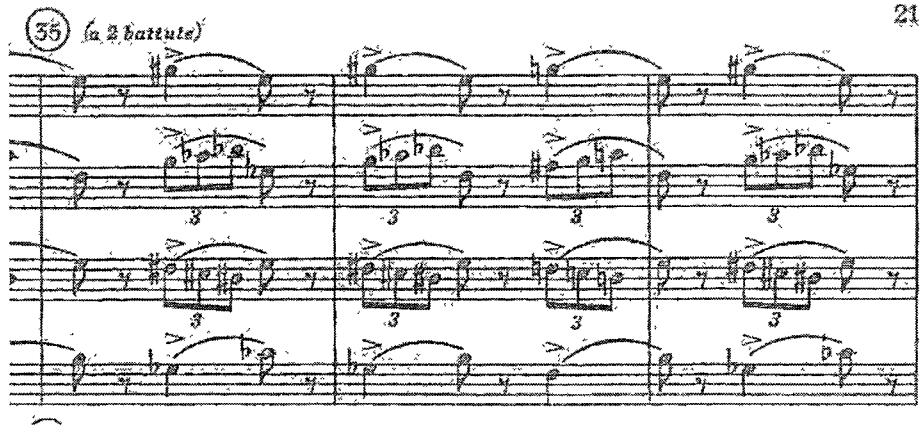
<sup>87</sup> Eric Nestler, "A performance analysis of Alexander Glazunov's saxophone quartet Op.109, William Karlins quartet no. 2 for saxophones, variations and cadenzas, and Florent Schmitt's saxophone quartet Op.102" (DMA, Indiana University, 1993), 147-148.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> ♪Audio Example 1- Aurelia - Movement I - opening phrase/see Figure 1

punctuating accents that pull the tempo back before a continual *accelerando* through the *presto* to the end (see Figure 3).<sup>90</sup>

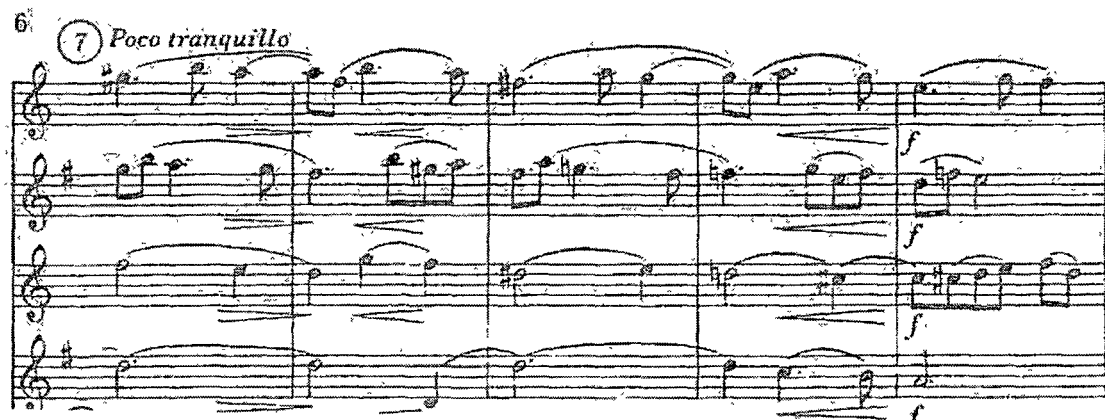
**Figure 3 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Movement I - Rehearsal No.35**



The concept of perpetual motion is necessary for this movement to avoid disruption of the melodic line, however Glazunov provides *poco tranquillo* sections at rehearsal numbers 7 (see Figure 4), 15 and 28 to allow for a brief relaxation of the melodic line.

<sup>90</sup> Audio Example 2- Habanera - Movement I - Rehearsal No.35/see Figure 3

**Figure 4 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109 - Movement I - Poco Tranquillo***



The Raschèr quartet take an individual approach to this passage with the melody and counter melody played by the soprano and alto respectively at rehearsal number 7 and its recurrence at 15 are performed with a focus on accenting the shorter melodic fragments which create a frantic, uneasy feeling for the listener (see Figure 4).<sup>91</sup>

This was another section that required careful attention by 22SQ during rehearsals. Initially the flow of the line seemed stilted and uneven. The suggestion was made that the alto line was too quiet, in that it should be at a comparable volume to the soprano. Once this was remedied the balance of the section and flow of the tranquillo lines seemed to fall into place and instantly improve the quality of performance (see Figure 4).<sup>92</sup> The passing of lines between the voices and ensemble interaction is therefore essential for success at

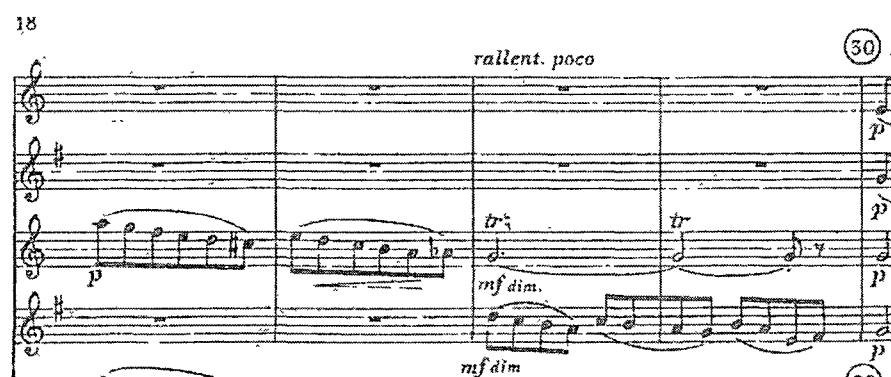
<sup>91</sup> ♫Audio Example 3- Raschèr - Movement I - *poco tranquillo*/see Figure 4

<sup>92</sup> ♫Audio Example 4 - 22SQ - Movement I - *poco tranquillo*/see Figure 4

Glazunov's work. Awareness by ensemble members of the thematic material and their instrument's role within the structure of the work is vital for success.

*Rallentando* and *calando* markings are also specified at linking passages in the movement and the successful employment of these aids the transition of sections. The *rallentando* markings occur in the bars prior to rehearsal marks 16 and again at 30 (see Figure 5). Each quartet has a different approach to these transitions.

**Figure 5 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109 - Movement I - *rallentando* preceding rehearsal no.30***



The Habanera quartet chooses to use the *rallentando* prior to rehearsal number 30 to decrease tempo slightly before the final section, which can be seen as a literal reflection of Glazunov's marking *rallent poco*.<sup>93</sup> In comparison, the Aurelia quartet uses this opportunity to come to a complete stop, emphasising the contrast in the sections.<sup>94</sup> Aurelia's approach to *Movement I* of Glazunov's *Quartett* was adopted by 22SQ for this reason. 22SQ decided that decreasing

<sup>93</sup> ♪Audio Example 5 - Habanera – Movement I - *rallentando* preceding rehearsal no. 30/see Figure 5

<sup>94</sup> ♪Audio Example 6- Aurelia – Movement I - *rallentando* preceding rehearsal no. 30/see Figure 5



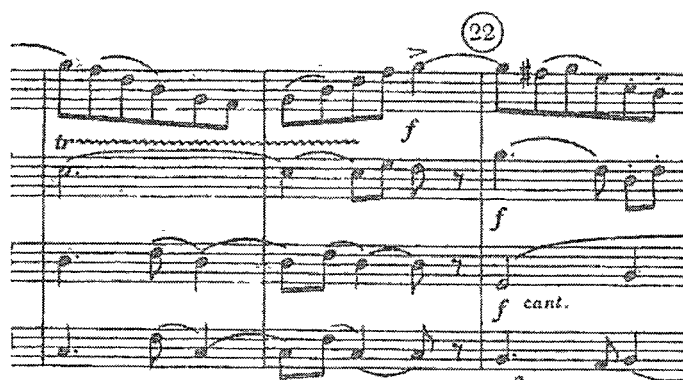
tempo and coming to a complete stop allowed for a clearly defined transition between sections.<sup>95</sup>

In the preparation of this work, subtle tempi fluctuation opportunities were taken up by 22SQ to aid the performance. Gentle elongation of the bars preceding rehearsal numbers 10 (see Figure 6)<sup>96</sup> and 22 (see Figure 7)<sup>97</sup> were used to give shape to musical phrases and indicate definite transitions to new or recurring musical ideas.

**Figure 6 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* – Movement I - lead into rehearsal no. 10**



**Figure 7 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Movement I - lead into rehearsal no. 22**



<sup>95</sup> ♫Audio Example 7 – 22SQ – Movement I – *rallentando* preceding rehearsal no. 30/see Figure 5

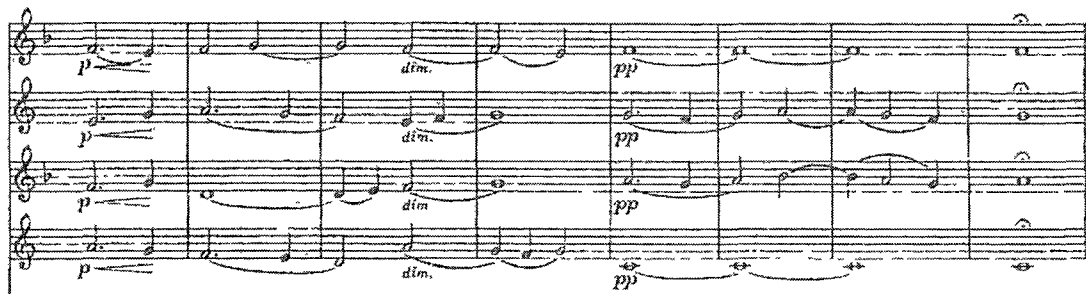
<sup>96</sup> ♫Audio Example 8 - 22SQ - Movement I - lead into rehearsal no. 10/ see Figure 6

<sup>97</sup> ♫Audio Example 9 - 22SQ – Movement I - lead into rehearsal no. 22/ see Figure 7

## CANZONA:

Glazunov's *Canzona Variee*<sup>98</sup> forms the inner material in the work. The *Canzona* theme itself is a simple chorale-like piece featuring the soprano melody accompanied by a simple chord progression played by the other quartet members. The scope for interpretation in this movement is varied and each quartet exploits their individual sound quality, however and there are a few similarities between approaches. Elements for consideration are the use of dynamics and phrasing. Glazunov's dynamics provide significant challenges for the ranges in which the voices are playing. As the movement features the soprano it is important that line is always heard, however it is also written in the lower range for the instrument and is scored at *piano* and *pianissimo* (see Figure 8), which makes this almost impossible for even an accomplished performer.

**Figure 8 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109 Canzona*: closing phrase**



<sup>98</sup> Or 'song and variations'.

An accurate representation of these dynamics would force the soprano to sub-tone,<sup>99</sup> which would in turn effect the balance and tone of the ensemble. In performance, quartets need to ensure their dynamics are developed contextually rather than a literally.

The Marcel Mule quartet's recording of the *Canzona* is one of the few extracts from the Glazunov's quartet they recorded.<sup>100</sup> A striking feature of this recording is the quartet's notably strict adherence to articulation as set out in the score. The Habanera quartet takes a similar approach with their articulation and phrase shape, which is apparent in their similar treatment of the opening phrase.<sup>101</sup>

**Figure 9 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109 - Canzona: opening phrase***



<sup>99</sup> Subtone is the term given to very quiet playing that is often used in approximately the lower fifth of the register, employed to achieve a proper pianissimo dynamic level. The embouchure is adjusted to filter weak overtones and produce a dull sound. Marcus Weiss and Georgio Netti, *The techniques of saxophone playing*, (Kassel: Bärenreiter GmbH & Co., 2010) 161.

<sup>100</sup> As the quartet was written for and premiered by this ensemble it could be assumed that the Mule Quartet's interpretation is historically and musically accurate given the opportunity for interaction with the composer through rehearsals and performance.

<sup>101</sup> ♪Audio Example 10 - Mule - *Canzona*: opening/see Figure 9

♪Audio Example 11 - Habanera - *Canzona*: opening/see Figure 9

Glazunov marks the *Canzona* score *ben ten*, with much *tenuto*. The Mule quartet's approach and literal translation of articulation disrupts the melodic flow. In contrast, the Raschèr quartet interprets the movement with a full bodied sound that is iconic to their style of playing.<sup>102</sup> Their sound mass is continuous throughout the movement except for a collective breath and phrase break before rehearsal number 37.<sup>103</sup>

**Figure 10 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109 - Canzona*: preceding rehearsal no.37**



The Raschèr quartet plays all phrases *legato* and articulation follows the score specifications but approached it with a soft tonguing to punctuate the melodic line. Momentum throughout the movement is maintained until the final four bars where a dramatic *rallentando* is controlled by the tenor and alto.<sup>104</sup>

The Aurelia quartet's approach is particularly gentle. The soprano blends the solo line with the accompaniment well and does not sit too far above the texture while the other voices weave throughout the texture and moving lines are made

<sup>102</sup> Peter Avis, liner notes to *Music for saxophones*, the Raschèr saxophone quartet, (Cala CACD77003, compact disc, 1995).

<sup>103</sup> Audio Example 12- Raschèr - *Canzona*: pre 37/see Figure 10

<sup>104</sup> Audio Example 13 - Raschèr - *Canzona*: closing phrase/see Figure 8

present within the melodic context. Aurelia approach the phrasing of this movement in a very melodic way using the dynamics to assist in the shape of their phrasing. Their use of articulation is non intrusive and a soft tonguing approach is used with legato phrasing.<sup>105</sup>

In the preparation of the *Canzona* 22SQ focused continually on making the movement as song or as hymn like as possible. As a quartet, 22SQ felt this was an important feature of the movement and wanted to show the saxophone's vocal timbral capabilities through phrasing and interaction of parts by attempting to emulate a vocal style in regards to phrasing. One of the preparation techniques as overseen by 22SQ's chamber music coach was an experiment in which the quartet were asked to attempt the opening of the *Canzona* (see Figure 9) by moving through the clearly defined chord progression with each note re-articulated, to be played without *rubato* or *vibrato*. This task was posed as an exercise in ensemble skills where the goal was to move as a single unit and emulate the chord progression, and subsequent sound decay as if it were being played on a piano. This exercise produced a sound quality in the opening line that was very similar to the Mule style of playing. The quartet felt this was not the sound or textural quality they wished to portray. Instead 22SQ adopted a gentle *legato* style of playing similar to the Aurelia quartet and allowed for flexibility and a little tempo fluctuation throughout.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> ♪Audio Example 14 - Aurelia - *Canzona*: opening phrase/see Figure 9

<sup>106</sup> ♪Audio Example 15 - 22SQ - *Canzona*: opening/see Figure 9

22SQ also made use of the collective breath concept before rehearsal number 37. Taking a breath here marks the transition between definite phrases and also helps to heighten the song like melodic phrases of the movement.<sup>107</sup>

With no score indication prior to rehearsal number 39 it is interesting to note that each quartet treats the preceding four bar phrase in a similar way. Each interpretation uses dynamics to shape the phrase and dramatically slow the tempo before the return of the opening theme (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109 Canzona*: preceding rehearsal no. 39**



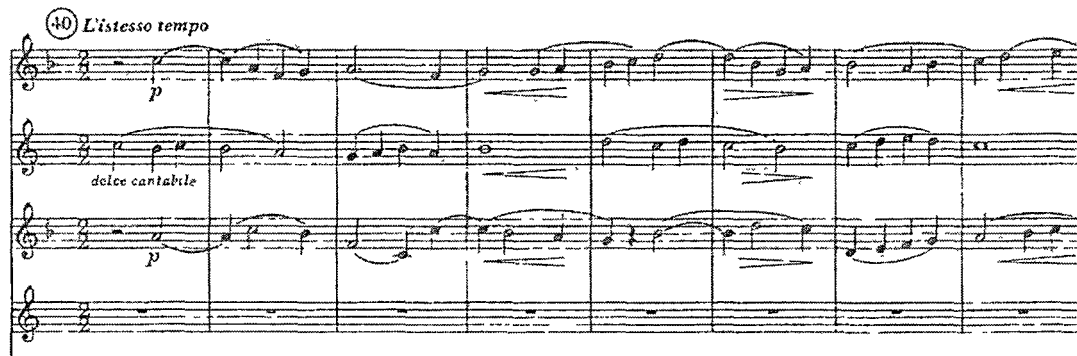
## VARIATION I:

The first of Glazunov's variations is a re-working of the *Canzona* featuring the alto. The opening counters the alto against the soprano and tenor whose respective lines interweave continually as an accompanying figure. The alto line is marked *dolce cantabile* and the movement is marked *L'istesso tempo* (see

<sup>107</sup> ♫Audio Example 16 - 22SQ - *Canzona*: pre 37/See Figure 10

Figure 12). Both these markings help emphasise the material as a re-working of the *Canzona* and suggest it is to be played in a similar style. The baritone makes its entrance at rehearsal number 43 with the return of the opening theme and sustains a pedal note to the end of the movement creating a gentle closing to the variation.

**Figure 12 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Variation I - opening phrase**



The alto player from the Raschèr quartet takes a *legato* approach to the solo line whilst moving at a comparatively quicker tempo than their *Canzona* despite the *L'istesso tempo* marking. The accompanying lines from the soprano and tenor blend and move as a single counter melodic figure.<sup>108</sup> In contrast, Aurelia sustain a slower tempo with the alto leading the solo line using some *rubato* and much *vibrato* while both accompanying voices play in a similarly soloistic style, while still in support of the alto line.<sup>109</sup>

<sup>108</sup> ♪Audio Example 17 - Raschèr - Variation I - opening phrase/see Figure 12

<sup>109</sup> ♪Audio Example 18 - Aurelia - Variation I - opening phrase/see Figure 12

The Habanera quartet sustain their tempo from the *Canzona* through into *Variation I*. The alto line in the Habanera version sits prominently above the accompanying texture and uses both *rubato* and *vibrato*. Habanera's accompanying lines move similarly to those of the Raschèr quartet in a unified approach, however due to their prominently bright sound qualities the soprano and tenor lines are clearly distinguished as separate voices in the counter melody.<sup>110</sup>

In preparation of this movement 22SQ chose to maintain a similar tempo to their *Canzona*. The alto solo line is closely supported in dynamic range by the soprano and tenor and each player's unique sound quality is present.<sup>111</sup> Similar to the Aurelia and Habanera quartets this approach showcases the timbral quality of each saxophone but does not necessarily blend. Individual sound qualities combined with each voice being scored in its mid range created challenges for 22SQ such as intonation, for individuals and across the ensemble.

One further comparison between all quartets is the interpretation of a *riteneuto* prior to rehearsal number 43 (see Figure 13). This tempo manipulation is not marked in the score but acts as a musical gesture similar to that adopted by all quartets in the *Canzona* before the entrance of the baritone and the restatement of the opening theme. Figure 13 shows the independent soprano and tenor lines moving against each other and the alto line with minimal movement finishing its phrase before the re-statement of the opening theme at rehearsal number 43.

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<sup>110</sup> ♪ Audio Example 19- Habanera - Variation I - opening phrase/see Figure 12

<sup>111</sup> ♪ Audio Example 20 - 22SQ - Variation I - opening phrase/see Figure 12



**Figure 13 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109 - Variation I* - preceding rehearsal no. 43**



Both the Raschèr and Habanera quartets choose to stretch the tempo slightly for the last few beats before rehearsal number 43, and also at the end of the movement.<sup>112</sup> The Aurelia quartet gradually slows down gradually through the four bar phrase and dramatically stretches the length of the final two beats leading into rehearsal number 43.<sup>113</sup>

The issue of tempo manipulation in this passage was contentious for 22SQ. Heated debate ensued as to whether the entire four bar phrase prior to rehearsal number 43 should slow or whether a decrease in tempo should happen only slightly over the last two beats. The discussions also raised important performance considerations that needed to be resolved by the quartet. The soprano and alto players believed that relaxing the four bar phrase before rehearsal number 43 emphasised and supported the lyrical sensitivity from the *Canzona*. The tenor player held the view that any decrease in tempo should refrain from happening until the last bar of the phrase; he was responsible for

<sup>112</sup> ♪Audio Example 21– Raschèr – Variation I - preceding rehearsal no. 43/see Figure 13

♪Audio Example 22 - Habanera - Variation I - preceding rehearsal no. 43/see Figure 13

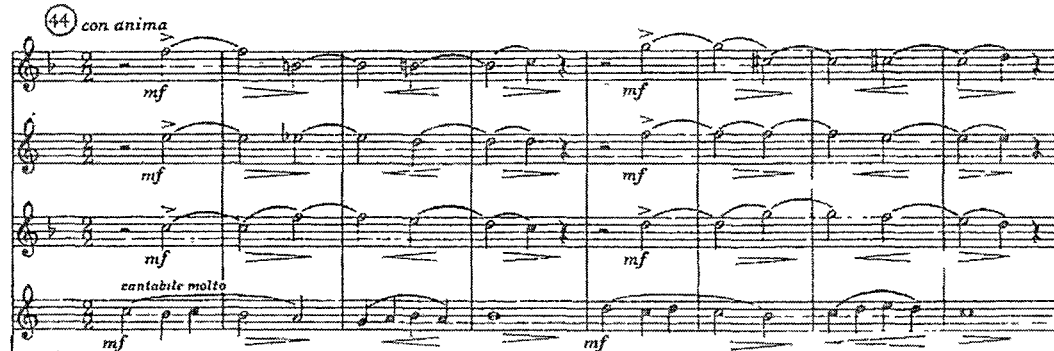
<sup>113</sup> ♪Audio Example 23 - Aurelia - Variation I - preceding rehearsal no. 43/see Figure 13

the moving line during these bars and felt the alto and soprano should adapt and respond sensitively to his shaping of the Tenor line. Sensitivity notwithstanding, an understanding was reached that in live performance the phrase would be determined by the performers on the spur of the moment. In 22SQ's recorded version of this movement the tempo is relaxed four bars before rehearsal number 43, with a gradual *riteneuto* initiated two bars later.<sup>114</sup>

## VARIATION II:

Variation two is the second re-working of the *Canzona* theme and marked *con anima* (See Figure 14). The baritone is marked *cantabile molto* with the other three voices accompanying in unison throughout. Each quartet features the baritone in a soloistic manner and makes use of *rubato* and *vibrato*.

**Figure 14 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Variation II: opening phrase**



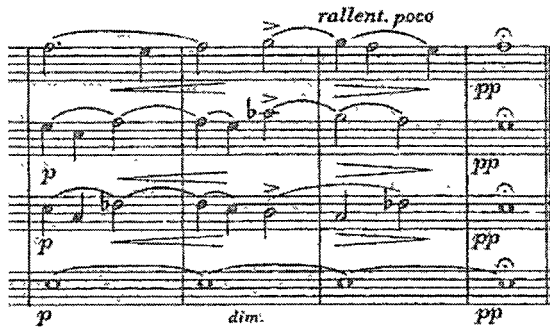
The Raschèr quartet approach the *con anima* at the opening to *Variation II* with a markedly faster tempo,<sup>115</sup> ensuring the flow of the movement is not interrupted

<sup>114</sup> Audio Example 24 - 22SQ - Variation I - preceding rehearsal number 43/see Figure 13

<sup>115</sup> Audio Example 25- Raschèr - Variation II - opening/see Figure 14

until the final four bar phrase when the accompanying figures emerge and dramatically slow to the final cadence.<sup>116</sup>

**Figure 15 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Variation II: closing phrase**



Aurelia choose a slightly quicker tempo than the Raschèr quartet that fluctuates throughout, ensuring the baritone is prominently featured with much use of *rubato* from both the baritone and the accompanying lines.<sup>117</sup> Aurelia, like the Raschèr quartet effect a dramatic *rallentando* for the closing phrase.<sup>118</sup>

The Habanera quartet by contrast, sustain a similar tempo to that of their *Canzona* and *Variation I*<sup>119</sup> and approach the ending by gradually decreasing speed throughout the last eight bars.<sup>120</sup>

For 22SQ selecting an appropriate and mutually agreed upon tempo was challenging. The importance of the *con anima* marking as something the quartet wished to exploit was often discussed but rarely successfully applied.

<sup>116</sup> Audio Example 26- Raschèr - Variation II - closing/see Figure 15

<sup>117</sup> Audio Example 27- Aurelia - Variation II - opening/see Figure 14

<sup>118</sup> Audio Example 28 - Aurelia - Variation II - closing/see Figure 15

<sup>119</sup> Audio Example 29 - Habanera - Variation II - opening/see Figure 14

<sup>120</sup> Audio Example 30- Habanera - Variation II - closing/see Figure 15

Encouraging the baritone player to start confidently and at a tempo that contrasted with the *Canzona* and *Variation I* was often part of the rehearsal dialogue. This issue was often self-correcting in live performances as it was important for the variations to flow continuously and therefore all members of the quartet were vigilant not only with tempi but also the time that lapsed in between movements. A significant challenge for 22SQ then came in the recording studio where the performance atmosphere is greatly different to that of live performance.<sup>121</sup> As a result the tempo of *Variation II* was slower and the final recording cut is performed by the quartet at a similar speed to the preceding movements.<sup>122</sup>

### VARIATION III:

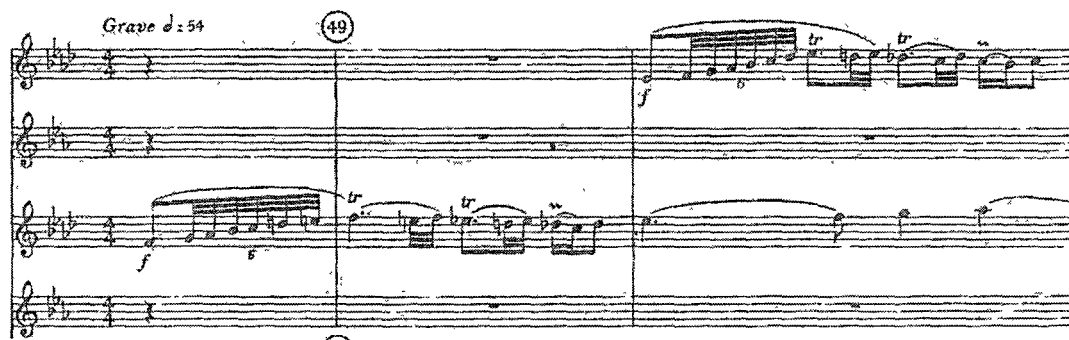
*Variation III - á la Schumann* is marked *Grave* with a tempo indication of crotchet at 54mm (see Figure 16). This movement makes use of complex composite rhythmic lines throughout the ensemble and is highly ornamented with frequently recurring trills and mordents (see Figure 17). Glazunov also gives direction for tempo and musical flexibility throughout the movement with directions such as *agitato*, *con moto*, and *calando*.

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<sup>121</sup> That is, performing and recording *Variation II* in isolation without the flow of the variations as a continuous set or the adrenaline of live performance, a significant challenge was the selecting and sustaining the quartet's ideal tempi.

<sup>122</sup> ♪Audio Example 31- 22SQ - Variation II - opening/see Figure 14

**Figure 16-Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109* - Variation III: Opening**



Each quartet takes a distinctive approach to this movement. The Habanera quartet explores the quickest tempo, and creates relentless momentum by pushing phrases forward. This tempo is maintained well and further increased in the sections marked *agitato*.<sup>123</sup> The Raschèr quartet uses a faster tempo, effecting the melodic lines with a wild, carefree enthusiasm through their approach to trilling where ornamentation is freely interpreted stylistically by individuals across the ensemble.<sup>124</sup> The Aurelia quartet performs the movement with a tempo closer to the score marking highlighting the opening figure's tranquil sensitivity through their use of *legato* and *rubato*.<sup>125</sup>

An interesting point of interpretation for the Habanera quartet is their decision to elongate the first semi-quaver of the run that is passed between the voices at rehearsal number 50 (see Figure 17). This elongation is applied to each of the

<sup>123</sup> Audio Example 32 - Habanera - Variation III - opening/see Figure 16

<sup>124</sup> Audio Example 33 - Raschèr - Variation III - opening/see Figure 16

<sup>125</sup> Audio Example 34 - Aurelia - Variation III - opening/see Figure 16

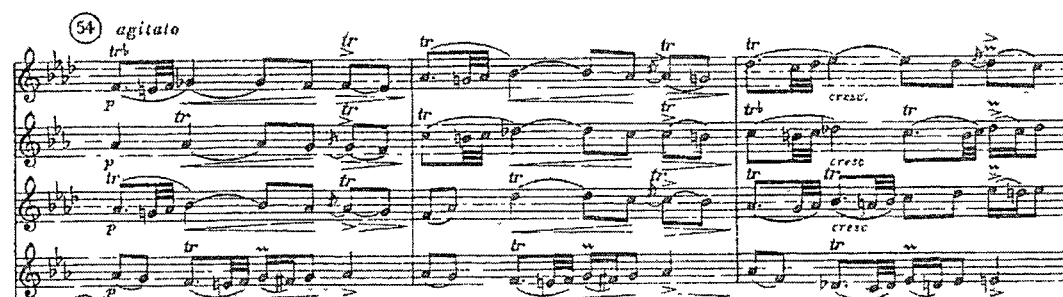
lines and is consistent throughout the parts, indicating the interpretation of this figure was mutually agreed upon.<sup>126</sup>

**Figure 17 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109* - Variation III: rehearsal no. 50**



Despite individual differences in sound qualities each quartet takes a similar approach to the climactic section of the piece. Each quartet increases speed and intensity of runs and trills from the *con moto* section through the *agitato* at rehearsal number 54 (see Figure 18) and use the *piu mosso* five bars later as the pinnacle of the movement (see Figure 19).

**Figure 18 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Variation III: *Agitato***



All quartets used the *con moto* and *agitato* sections to push the music forward and made the climactic gestures sustain focus in the two bars before rehearsal

<sup>126</sup> Audio Example 35- Habanera - Variation III- semiquaver elongation/see Figure 17

number 55. 22SQ took a truncated approach to the climax by using the first beat in the *piu mosso* bar as the pinnacle and subsequently relaxed letting the following bars subside into the *come prima* at rehearsal number 55.<sup>127</sup>

**Figure 19 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109 - Variation III: Climax***



Another challenge faced by 22SQ in the preparation of this movement was the alignment of precise rhythmic subdivisions combined with the tempo flexibility the quartet felt it was important to manipulate. The presence of the florid ornamentation throughout was often an issue in rehearsals, as it would contribute to rhythmic inaccuracy. The quartet dealt with this by excluding the ornaments until the rhythmic motives were correct and increases and decreases in tempo rehearsed and confirmed.

#### **VARIATION IV:**

The interpretation of *Variation IV à la Chopin* is quite similar by all quartets. The movement initially features the alto with a gentle melodic line. The alto is then accompanied by the baritone in counterpoint throughout the recapitulation at rehearsal number 60 (see Figure 20). Similarities in approach include the use of

<sup>127</sup> Audio Example 36- 22SQ- Variation III - Climax/see Figure 19

long legato phrases and the tasteful use of tempi fluctuations as directed in the score.

**Figure 20 - Alexander Glazunov – *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109* - Variation IV: Opening and Recapitulation**



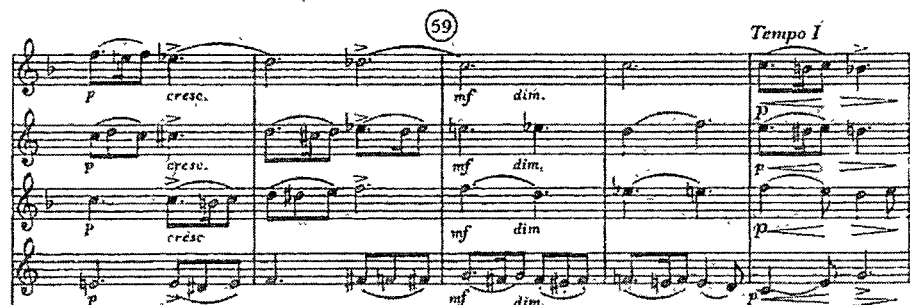
Variation IV is the second extract recorded by the Mule quartet. They perform the movement with careful attention to the initial marked tempo dotted crotchet at 56 bpm. The quartet then deviates from the score by using dramatic *rallentandi* at cadence points and transitions throughout the movement. At rehearsal number 59 (see Figure 21) the decrease in tempo is so severe that the music comes to a gradual stop before starting the next section.<sup>128</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Audio Example -37 -Mule - Variation IV- preceding rehearsal number 59/see Figure 21

Figure 21



Figure 21 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109 - Variation IV: Sostenuto* preceding rehearsal no.59



The Mule quartet exaggerate the *sostenuto*, *diminuendo* and *calando* markings in the score and then approach the *animando espressivo piu mosso* preceding rehearsal number 58 in a more restrained manner.<sup>129</sup>

Figure 22 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109 - Variation IV: animando*



Both the Raschèr and Aurelia quartets' approach to the overall shape of the movement is almost identical; the defining characteristics of their respective tone qualities provide the greatest contrast. Both quartets initially perform a

<sup>129</sup> Audio Example 38 - Mule - Variation 4 - *animando espressivo*/see Figure 22

slightly quicker tempo than that indicated in the score and use the pulse of the 6/8 time signature to create a skipping, light-hearted approach.<sup>130</sup>

The interpretation of both quartets make dramatic use of the score directions. An example is the *animando* four bars before rehearsal number 58 (see Figure 22) and a well supported legato sound to create a grandiose broadening throughout the *sostenuto* leading to rehearsal number 59 into the tempo 1 (see Figure 21).

The Habanera quartet takes a slightly slower tempo, resulting in the entire movement having a greater sense of tranquillity. In comparison to the other quartets Habanera's use of contrast is less dramatic through the *animando* section preceding rehearsal number 58, which reflects the overall relaxed feeling created in their interpretation.<sup>131</sup>

The approach taken by 22SQ to this movement is similar that of Habanera's in that this movement provides the opportunity for a tranquil contrast in the overall set of variations. Like the Habanera quartet, 22SQ chose to elongate the phrase leading into rehearsal number 57.<sup>132</sup>

**Figure 23 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109* Variation IV: preceding rehearsal no. 57**

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<sup>130</sup> Audio Example 39 - Raschèr - Variation IV – opening/see Figure 20

Audio Example 40 - Aurelia - Variation IV- opening/see Figure 20

<sup>131</sup> Audio Example 41 - Habanera - Variation IV ~ *animando*/see Figure 22

<sup>132</sup> Audio Example 42- 22SQ - Variation IV - preceding figure 57/see Figure 23



This decision was made to emphasise the transition of sections. 22SQ found that much rehearsal time was required to deal with issues regarding transitions such as these along with balance, dynamics and ensemble playing. The balance between the featured alto line and accompanying parts in the opening, for example, was an issue for the quartet. Both the featured line and accompanying figures are marked at *piano*: fervent discussion ensued as the alto player's personal preference of dynamic level resulted in the line being lost in the accompaniment. Other members of the quartet felt the quality of accompaniment would suffer if their dynamic level were to be forced to match that of the alto player. This issue was remedied when the alto player projected the opening line whilst aiming to retain a piano sensitivity with fellow quartet members. All subsequent dynamics were then used as a relative guide and were used to direct phrase shape throughout the movement.

## VARIATION V:

*Variation V – scherzo* is approached in either one of two distinct ways by each quartet. The Mule, Aurelia and Habanera quartets chose to make dexterity and

virtuosity of ensemble articulation the feature of the movement. Glazunov marks the scherzo as *presto* with a dotted minim = 108. The Mule, Aurelia and Habanera quartets initiate and maintain a quick tempo, which is much faster than this score indication. The Raschèr quartet, in contrast, takes the movement at a tempo much closer to the metronome marking and perform the movement with a much smoother articulation instead of observing the *sempre staccato* score indication.<sup>133</sup>

**Figure 24 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* Variation V: Opening**



When approaching *Variation V*, 22SQ found that considerable attention to articulation was required in the opening of the movement and the section commencing at rehearsal number 68 with the exposed transferral of lines between each voice (see Figure 25).<sup>134</sup>

<sup>133</sup> ♪ Audio Example 43 - Raschèr - Variation V - opening/see Figure 24

♪ Audio Example 44 - Mule - Variation V - opening/see Figure 24

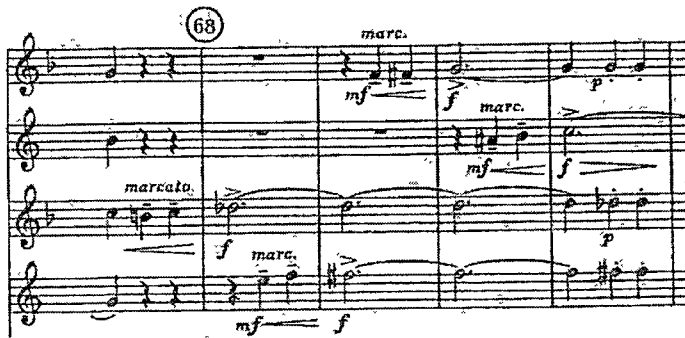
♪ Audio Example 45 - Aurelia - Variation V - opening/see Figure 24 **Figure 24Error!**

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♪ Audio Example 46 - Habanera - Variation V - opening/see Figure 24

<sup>134</sup> ♪ Audio Example 47 - 22SQ - Variation V - rehearsal no. 68/see Figure 25

**Figure 25 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* - Variation V: rehearsal no. 68**



The opening proved challenging for the quartet as, again, individual concepts of dynamic and degree of articulation differed between each player. Matching articulations throughout the opening and at rehearsal number 68 was continually rehearsed and guided by the quartet's chamber music coach. Recording these rehearsals was also beneficial in aiding the quartet to mediate and balance individual ideas so that a uniform ensemble approach could be negotiated.

### **MOVEMENT III – FINALE:**

The scope for interpretation is at its maximum in the final movement of the work. *Movement III – Finale* uses a recurring theme in a quasi rondo like form. Following the Raschèr and Habanera Quartets approach, 22SQ chose to highlight the strong rhythmic drive, achieving a strident and grandiose opening, using a slight *rallentando* before the statement of the theme at rehearsal number 84.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>135</sup> ♪Audio Example 48- Raschèr - Finale -opening/see Figure 26  
 ♪Audio Example 49- 22SQ - Finale - opening/see Figure 26

Figure 26 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109 Finale: opening*



One of the defining and pivotal sections of this work is the *Giocosu*<sup>136</sup> at rehearsal number 98 (see Figure 27). Glazunov characterises this by writing descending major thirds, slurred in pairs as the motif is played simultaneously between the four voices.

<sup>136</sup> *Giocosu* translates from Italian as 'playfully'.

**Figure 27 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109* Finale: *Giocoso***



During rehearsals, 22SQ initially developed a similar approach to the *giocoso* section to the Raschèr quartet's interpretation, where by the slurred pairs were heavily emphasised and the articulation punctuated the continuity of sound.<sup>137</sup>

Through the course of many rehearsals the focus centred instead on the blend and continuity of sound as well as the resonance that could be achieved between the four voices. The voice range in this section is scored in the middle range of each saxophone and as such allows for a full-bodied resonance that 22SQ felt they wish to exploit to aid in creating a broad, legato style.<sup>138</sup>

The Aurelia Quartet also exploited the sensitivity of this section by this line with a decrease in tempo and thickening the texture of this section creating a textural contrast with the surrounding material.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>137</sup> Audio Example 50 - Raschèr - Finale - *giocoso*/see Figure 27

<sup>138</sup> Audio Example 51 - 22SQ - Finale - *giocoso*/see Figure 27

<sup>139</sup> Audio Example 52- Aurelia - Finale - *giocoso*/see Figure 27

The interpretation of the *poco tranquillo* marking at rehearsal number 105 highlights again another point of interpretive difference between the quartets (see Figure 28).

**Figure 28 - Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op. 109 - Finale: Tranquillo***



The Raschèr quartet maintains tempo throughout this section and use the *tranquillo* merely as a contrast in texture to the preceding angular staccato lines.<sup>140</sup> The Aurelia and Habanera Quartets approached this section similarly:

<sup>140</sup> ♪Audio Example 53 - Raschèr - Finale - *Tranquillo*/see Figure 28



observing the markings by decreasing tempo and ensuring the melodic lines flowed smoothly and gradually relaxed through to the *tempo 1* to the fermata.<sup>141</sup>

22SQ chose to approach this section in a more dramatic fashion. The quartet used the *ritenueto* and *diminuendo* prior to rehearsal number 105 to bring the music to a gradual stop after which the soprano led the section marked *espressivo* before rehearsal number 105. 22SQ exploited the exchange of the *espressivo* line through the voices and exaggerated the melodic lines with *rubato*, to heighten the tranquil effect of this section. The following dramatic *agitato* and *accelerando* markings were closely observed through the bar leading to *tempo 1*, to create a dramatic contrast, which reverted to a rhythmically strong motif from the original introductory theme.<sup>142</sup>

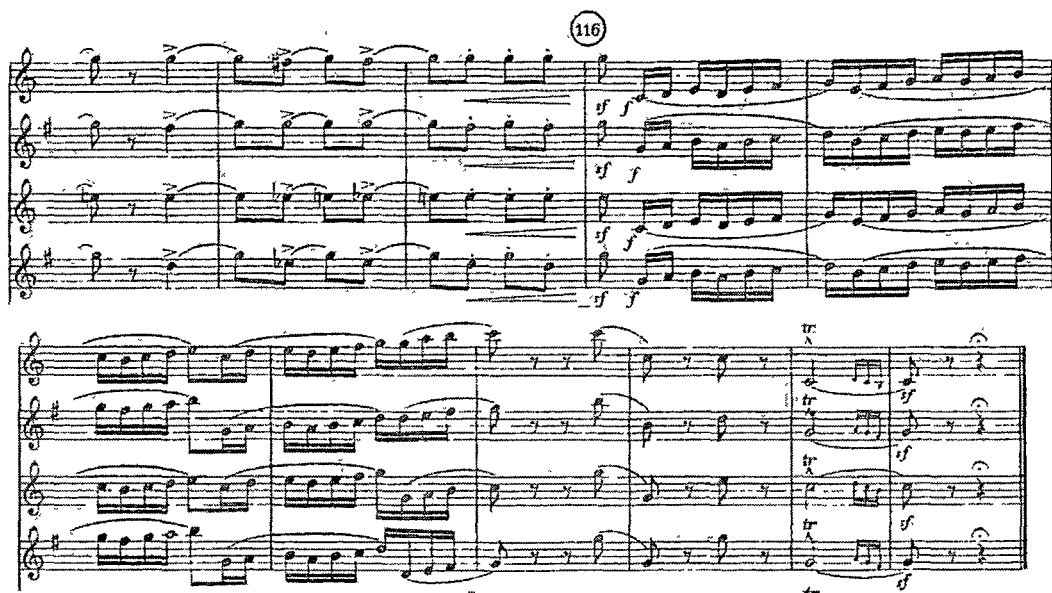
The climactic ending of the finale was the most enjoyable section for preparation by 22SQ. The movement increases gradually to the close of the movement, where Glazunov provides the opportunity for quartets to demonstrate their virtuosity and control through the final presto (see Figure 29).

**Figure 29 Alexander Glazunov - *Quartet for Saxophones Op.109* - Finale: closing phrase**

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<sup>141</sup> Audio Example 54 - Aurelia - Finale - *Tranquillo*/see Figure 28

<sup>142</sup> Audio Example 55 - 22SQ - Finale - *Tranquillo*/see Figure 28



The Raschèr quartet takes a restrained approach to the tempo increase then slows down dramatically for the final three bars, omitting the final trill. The result of which creates an anti climactic end.<sup>143</sup>

Aurelia and Habanera both display their virtuosity with the *accelerando* and unison playing of the final scalar passages. Aurelia finish the work with a subtle *rallentando* to emphasise the flourish of the trill on the penultimate note, whereas Habanera continue to increase tempo throughout concluding with a strong rhythmic trill and final note.<sup>144</sup>

22SQ rehearsed ending the work in both the style of the Raschèr and Aurelia quartets but after trial and error found that the best approach for the quartet was in the style of Aurelia. The deciding factor was the treatment of the trill and

<sup>143</sup> ♪Audio Example 56 - Raschèr - Finale - closing/see Figure 29

<sup>144</sup> ♪Audio Example Aurelia 57 - Finale - closing/see Figure 29


♪Audio Example 58 - Habanera - Finale - closing/see Figure 29

final ornamented flourish. The quartet concluded the best manner in which to convincingly perform this gesture was to ensure the trill was confident, fast and precisely resolved as an ensemble.<sup>145</sup>

## CONCLUSION:

The saxophone quartet is limited in having a shorter history of performance practice and tradition of interpretation as enjoyed by other chamber ensembles. This lack of history allows for the genre to continue evolving and for ensembles to work and create their own interpretation free from the limitations of expected musical convention. For new quartets approaching Glazunov's work, the interpretive and stylistic decisions made by professional saxophone quartets serve as an important guide for potential opportunities. By listening to the different approaches of current professional quartets such as Aurelia, Raschèr or Habanera, aspiring players can observe contrasting interpretations and ideally make conscious decisions about the interpretation of the work. Aurelia's interpretation shows each player's unique ability, sound quality and the quartet's superior musicality and ensemble skills through their manipulation of musical elements such as *rubato* and a balanced approach. The ensemble's approach indicates each quartet member's skill as soloists through their blend of four individual sounds and their approach to solo lines. In contrast, the Raschèr quartet's ethos of democracy internalises their sense of unity within the ensemble approach and their choice of slightly faster tempi means the work

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<sup>145</sup>  Audio Example 59 - 22SQ - Finale - closing/see Figure 29

flows naturally. Habanera's approach to Glazunov's quartet shows impressive technical flair and a unified ensemble approach. From the limited access to Marcel Mule's quartet recording it is evident that the dedicatee quartet during the premiere and subsequent performances took liberties interpreting the score. While there are similarities between the approaches of each quartet, the unique sound qualities and interpretive decisions made by these ensembles ultimately leads to each distinctive interpretation.

For saxophone quartets attempting Glazunov's work, a mutual ensemble agreement on interpretive factors will help to synthesise the overall group interpretation and lead to a much more successful performance. Often making these decisions will be an unspoken agreement or an understanding between like-minded musicians, however questioning interpretation decisions permits further exploration and understanding of musical ideas. Cone suggests:

...As time passes we look at compositions in new ways. What is now obvious may be forgotten and need to be pointed out again; what is now unclear may become tomorrow's cliché. Interpretation must take such changes into account and change with them.<sup>146</sup>

The varying approaches made by professionals allow new quartets to explore their own interpretation. Despite being considered a new classical medium, saxophone quartets should be comforted by the fact we are not confined by tradition and performance practice in regards to interpretation. Even when interpretation is guided by the approach of another ensemble, the saxophone

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<sup>146</sup>Edward T Cone, *Musical form and musical performance* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co, 1968), 36.

quartet will always be defined by the nuance and aesthetic differences in individuals and ensembles.

As we progress in the twenty-first century so too does the classical saxophone as it continues to develop and come into its own as a serious classical instrument. In his compositions for solo and saxophone quartet Glazunov gave the classical saxophone the early foundations of repertoire and sparked a renewed interest for composers in the instrument. Without this contribution the saxophone as a classical instrument may well have faded into obscurity, living a forgotten existence in the shadow of popular and jazz genres.

## APPENDIX A – CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF EARLY WORKS FOR SAXOPHONE ENSEMBLES:<sup>147</sup>

Date	Title	Composer	Instrumentation
1844	Sextuor	Georges Kastner	S,A,A,Bs,Bs,Cb
1857	Premier Quatuor	Jean-Baptiste Singelee	S,A,T,B
1861	Pifferari	Jules Cressonnois	S,A,B,Bs
1861	Priere	Emile Jonas	S,A,T,B
1861	Quatuor	Mohr	S,A,T,B
1861	Quatuor	Jerome Savari	S,A,T,B
1861	Scherzo	Oscar Comettant	S,A,T,B
1862	Grand Quatuor Concertant	Jean-Baptiste Singelee	S,A,T,B
1864	Andante Religioso	Adolphe Valentine Sellenick	S,A,T,B
1864	Quatuor	Leon Kreutzer	S,A,T,B
1867	Impromptu	Louis Mayeur	S,A,T,B
c.1860	Andante	Henri Escudie	S,A,T,B plus piano
c.1860	Octet	Jerome Savari	Octet - specific instrumentation unknown
c.1860	Premiere Quatuor	Louis Mayeur	S,A,T,B
c.1860	Quintet	Armand Limnander Nieuwenhove	Quintet - specific instrumentation unknown
c.1860	Quintette	Jerome Savari	S,S,A,T,B
c.1860	Sextet	Jerome Savari	
c.1860	Septet	Jerome Savari	
c.1860	Tambourin	Jules Cressonnois	Unspecified quartet
c.1860	Cinq Quatuors	Victor Sambin	S,A,T,B
1879	Allegro de Concert	Caryl Florio	S,A,T,B
1879	Quintette Concertante	Caryl Florio	S,A,T,B plus piano
1887	Menuet et Scherzo	Caryl Florio	A,A,T,B
1907	Andante, Fugue and Finale	Raymond Moulaert	S,A,T,B
1908	Zwei Quartette	Gustav Bumke	A,T,B,Bs
1924	Danse	Jean Cras	S,A,T,B
1928-9	Sinfonia da camera	Maruice Schoemaker	S,A,T,B plus orchestra

<sup>147</sup>This table was compiled by T. Ruedman, "Lyric form archetype and the early works for saxophone quartet, 1844-1928: an analytical and historical context for saxophone quartet performance" (PhD diss, New York University, 2009), 39-40.

## APPENDIX B – TRANSLATED EXTRACTS OF GLAZUNOV'S CORRESPONDENCE:<sup>148</sup>

Postcard to Maximilian  
Oseevich Shteinberg  
(Paris), 21 March 1932

I have an idea to write a quartet for saxophones. These instruments are distinctively audible; in the orchestra they even cover regular woodwinds by their sound. There are great saxophone soloists in the band of the National Guard. Movement I is coming to an end, I have an idea for II-*Canzona*.

To I. A. Wolfman  
(Paris), 9, rue Lemoine,  
Boulogne sur Seine  
11 May 1932

Dear Ian Ansovich!

Thank you for your kind holiday greetings. I am sorry I have not written for so long. I was busy composing, and I have almost completed a quartet for four saxophones. The novelty of this work really thrills me, because I was formerly writing only string quartets. I don't know how it will sound.

To Shteinberg  
2 June 1932

Dear Maximilian Oseevich!

I received a letter from your sister who is worried about my health. I am guilty of being quite behind on my correspondence;- too much composing. My health continues to be poor. My swelling on the right foot does not leave me; the skin splits; sometimes it hurts. I walk most of the time wearing light shoes because I cannot wear boots. In damp weather, my gout pain increases.

I completed a composition for four saxophones (2 movements already scored and the third is in sketches). Movement I, *Allegro B-dur* in 3/4 with rhythm: a bit of American! Movement II, *Canzona Variee*. The theme is built only on harmony; the first two variations are strict classical medieval style. Next follows a variation with trills á la Schumann (akin to his symphonic etudes), variation á la Chopin and Scherzo. The *Finale* is in a fairly playful style. I am afraid that this composition will fatigue performers due to its length. I talked to one of them, and he assured me.

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<sup>148</sup> Andre Sobchenko, "Letters from the Glazunov years". *Saxophone Journal* (Sept/Oct 1997) 19(2): 66-68.

To I. A. Wolfman

(Paris) 9, rue Lemoine, Boulogne s (ur)

S (eine)

21 June 1932

Pain became unbearable; I am starting to lose my strength. I do not go anywhere, and I do not even put on clothes. I cannot even think to leave Paris in such a condition as early as July. I have not touched the piano for a long time. Thank God I sent the score (for printing) of the saxophone quartet before my condition became worse, but when will I hear my creation?

To Shteinberg

9 December 1932

It seems I shall finally hear my quartet next week. I still worry about how matters will stand with "breathing," because the number of rests are few, and I wish to achieve full consonance. Although one of the variation has three voices that are built on organ point.

To A. N. Rimsky-Korsakov

9 January 1933

If more gentle instruments like the clarinet family with its basses and bass clarinets were substituted for saxophones, it "just would not sound right" as Stasov used to say.

To L. V. Nikolayev

(Paris) 32, Avenue J. B. Clément,  
escalier 14, Boulogne s (ur) S (eine),

8 March 1933

I heard my quartet of saxophones finally with real sound. The separated parts sound good. I am afraid the (musical) color will be monotone; I can't do anything about that the whole range is: and you cannot get more than four notes at the same time.

To I.A. Wolfman,

14, rue de la Franque Mutualiste,  
Boulogne s/S.

11 April 1933

The quartet of saxophones was played for me in rehearsal at Salle Paveau. They played excellently, and it sounded full and original. I am glad that I heard this work.

To M. O. Shteinberg

10 December 1933

The performers are such virtuosi that it is impossible to imagine that they play the same instruments as we hear in jazzes. What really strikes me is their breathing and indefatigability, light sound, and clear intonation.



## APPENDIX C – ERIC NESTLER MOVEMENT I ANALYSIS<sup>149</sup>

The following is Dr Eric Nestler's harmonic analysis of the three opening phrase members from Glazunov's *Quartett für Saxophones Op. 109 – Movement I*. It shows the four voices in concert pitch and Nestler's suggested analysis which specifies the augmented triad comprised of the pitches Bb, F# and D – as indicated on the soprano line. This triad is what Nestler believes shows the influence of Wagner and Liszt on Glazunov's composition. This analysis also clearly shows the voices in unison and their subsequent harmonic shifts prior to the entry of the first theme at rehearsal figure 1 (bar 17)

The image shows a handwritten musical score for three saxophones: alto sax., ten. sax., and bari. sax. The score is in 4/4 time and features dynamic markings such as *f*, *mf*, *p*, *pp*, and *mf*. The alto sax line includes a circled '1' above the final measure. Below the staves, a harmonic analysis is provided, consisting of Roman numerals, chord symbols, and pitch names. The analysis is as follows:

Alto Sax.	Ten. Sax.	Bari. Sax.	Analysis
<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i> I I/III GR bIII
<i>mf</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>mf</i> I I/III GR bIII
<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i> I I/III GR bIII
<i>pp</i>	<i>pp</i>	<i>pp</i>	<i>pp</i> I I/III GR bIII
<i>mf</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>mf</i> I I/III GR bIII (I)

Below the analysis, the following chord symbols and pitch names are listed:

*f* I I/III GR bIII *mf* I I/III GR bIII *p* I I/III GR bIII *pp* I I/III GR bIII *mf* I I/III GR bIII (I)

Pitch names: F<sup>b</sup>, B<sup>b</sup>, G

<sup>149</sup>Eric Nestler, "A performance analysis of Alexander Glazunov's Saxophone quartet op. 109, William Karlins Quartet Nr. 2 for saxophones, variations and cadenzas and Florent Schmitt's saxophone quartet op. 102" (DMA, Indiana University, 1993), 34.

## APPENDIX D – NESTLER - COOPER-MEYER ANALYSIS

The following is Eric Nestler's application of the Cooper-Meyer method of analysis to the soprano line from Glazunov's *Canzona*, showing four distinct levels (labeled a, b, c, d) of grouping the pitches so as to construct a phrase. Nestler discusses his justification of applying this method of analysis, in that it represents phrase construction and demonstrates logical phrases by indicating strong and weak beats.<sup>150</sup> The 'a' level represents the smallest fractions of melodic stress. The 'b' level shows the phrases in their two measure units whilst 'c' expands this into four measure phrases and 'd' furthers this indicating eight measure phrases. Nestler recommends using this method of analysis to guide performer's in their choices of which parts of the phrase to stress and make clear but also for logistical matters for saxophonists such as breathing.<sup>151</sup>

The image displays a musical score for soprano saxophone (sop. sax.) from Glazunov's *Canzona*, marked *Andante*. The score is presented in four systems, each corresponding to a different level of analysis (a, b, c, d) of the soprano line. The notation includes measures 1 through 37. The analysis levels are indicated by brackets and labels: 'a' for the smallest fractions of melodic stress, 'b' for phrases in two measure units, 'c' for phrases in four measure units, and 'd' for phrases in eight measure units. Dynamics such as *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), and *pp* (pianissimo) are marked throughout the score. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature.

<sup>150</sup>For comprehensive terminology and theory of this analysis see Grosvenor Cooper and Leonard Meyer, *The rhythmic structure of music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 1.

<sup>151</sup>Eric Nestler, "A performance analysis of Alexander Glazunov's Saxophone quartet op. 109, William Karlins Quartet Nr. 2 for saxophones, variations and cadenzas and Florent Schmitt's saxophone quartet op. 102" (DMA, Indiana University, 1993), 38.

## APPENDIX E – LIST OF AUDIO EXAMPLES

- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 1 – AURELIA: MOVEMENT I – OPENING PHRASE
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 2 - HABANERA - MOVEMENT I - REHEARSAL NUMBER 35
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 3– RASCHÈR – MOVEMENT I – *POCO TRANQUILLO*
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 4 - 22SQ - MOVEMENT I - *POCO TRANQUILLO*
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 5 - HABANERA -MOVEMENT I - RALLENTANDO PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 30
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 6 - AURELIA - MOVEMENT I - RALLENTANDO PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 30
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 7 - 22SQ - RALLENTANDO PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 30
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 8- 22SQ - MOVEMENT I - LEAD INTO FIGURE 10
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 9 - 22SQ - MOVEMENT I - LEAD INTO FIGURE 22
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 10 -MULE - *CANZONA*: OPENING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 11 - HABANERA - *CANZONA*: OPENING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 12 - RASCHÈR - *CANZONA*: PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 37
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 13 - RASCHÈR - *CANZONA*: CLOSING PHRASE
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 14 - AURELIA - *CANZONA*: OPENING PHRASE
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 15 - 22SQ - *CANZONA*: OPENING PHRASE
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 16 - 22SQ - *CANZONA*: PRE 37
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 17 - RASCHÈR - VARIATION I: OPENING PHRASE
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 18 - AURELIA - VARIATION I: OPENING PHRASE
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 19 - HABANERA - VARIATION I: OPENING PHRASE
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 20 - 22SQ - VARIATION I: OPENING PHRASE
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 21 - RASCHER - VARIATION I - PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 43
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 22 - HABANERA - VARIATION I - PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 43
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 23 - AURELIA - VARIATION I - PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 43
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 24 - 22SQ - VARIATION I - PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 43
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 25 - RASCHÈR - VARIATION II– OPENING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 26 - RASCHÈR - VARIATION II - CLOSING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 27 - AURELIA - VARIATION II- OPENING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 28 - AURELIA - VARIATION II - CLOSING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 29 - HABANERA - VARIATION II - OPENING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 30 - HABANERA - VARIATION II - CLOSING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 31 - 22SQ - VARIATION II - OPENING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 32 - HABANERA - VARIATION III - OPENING
- ♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 33 - RASCHER - VARIATION III - OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 34 - AURELIA - VARIATION III - OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 35 - HABANERA - VARIATION III - SEMIQUAVER ELONGATION

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 36 - 22SQ - MOVEMENT III - CLIMAX

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 37 - MULE - VARIATION IV – PRECEDING REHEARSAL NUMBER 59

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 38 - MULE - VARIATION IV - *ANIMANDO ESPRESSIVO*

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 39 - RASCHÈR - VARIATION IV – OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 40 - AURELIA - VARIATION IV- OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 41- HABANERA - VARIATION IV – *ANIMANDO*

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 42 - 22SQ - VARIATION IV- PRECEDING FIGURE 57

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 43 - RASCHÈR - VARIATION V- OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 44 - MULE- VARIATION V - OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 45 - AURELIA - VARIATION V - OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 46 - HABANERA - VARIATION V - OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 47 - 22SQ - VARIATION V - REHEARSAL NO. 68

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 48 - RASCHÈR - FINALE - OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 49 - 22SQ - FINALE - OPENING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 50 - RASCHÈR - FINALE - *GIOCOSO*

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 51 - 22SQ - FINALE - *GIOCOSO*

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 52 - AURELIA - FINALE - *GIOCOSO*

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 53 - RASCHÈR - FINALE - TRANQUILLO

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 54 - AURELIA - FINALE - TRANQUILLO

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 55 - 22SQ - FINALE - TRANQUILLO

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 56 - RASCHÈR - FINALE - CLOSING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 57 - AURELIA - FINALE - CLOSING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 58 - HABANERA - FINALE - CLOSING

♪ AUDIO EXAMPLE 59 - 22SQ - FINALE - CLOSING

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